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Ministry of Forests and Range
Chief Forester's Office

NORTH COAST ALLOWABLE HARVEST LEVEL ANNOUNCED

VICTORIA – The allowable annual cut for the North Coast timber supply area has been reduced to 400,000 cubic metres, effective immediately, chief forester Jim Snetsinger announced today.

This reflects a new determination of 494,000 cubic metres under Section 8 of the Forest Act, as well as a reduction of 94,000 cubic metres under Section 173 of the act to account for additional areas under consideration for protected areas status.

The new allowable annual cut accounts for 24 conservancies established within the timber supply area in 2006 and 2007, as well as the impacts of applying ecosystem-based management principles in the area. Both ecosystem-based management and the conservancies are key elements of the Province's north and central coast land-use decision, announced last year.

"The Province has committed to full implementation of ecosystem-based management by March 2009 and additional protected areas within the North Coast TSA may be established," said Snetsinger. "To ensure harvest levels are sustainable, I am prepared to review this cut determination earlier than five years if necessary."

In September 2006, the North Coast timber supply area's allowable annual cut was reduced from 573,624 cubic metres to 435,624 cubic metres, to account for land temporarily prohibited from harvesting under Part 13 of the Forest Act. Today's determination permanently confirms most of this reduction, and reflects that the Province has since designated those areas as conservancies.

The North Coast timber supply area covers about 1.8 million hectares, with about eight per cent being available for timber harvesting. The North Coast timber supply area includes the City of Prince Rupert, as well as the smaller communities of Port Edward, Dodge Cove, Metlakatla, Hartley Bay, Kitkatla, Oona River, Lax Kw'alaams (Port Simpson), Gingolix, and Lakalzap.

The chief forester's determination is an independent professional judgment based on information ranging from technical forestry reports and public input to the government's social and economic goals. The timber supply review accounts for environmental concerns like biodiversity (which includes old-growth forests), water quality, and scenic values, in addition to social and economic issues.

Under the timber supply review, the chief forester or deputy chief forester must determine how much wood can be harvested in each of the province's 37 timber supply areas and 33 tree farm licences at least once every five years. A new allowable annual cut can be determined earlier in response to abnormal situations, or postponed for another five years if a harvest level is not expected to change significantly.

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Copies of the chief forester's allowable annual cut determination are available on the Ministry of Forests and Range website at www.for.gov.bc.ca/hts/ or from the North Coast Forest District office in Prince Rupert or the Coast Forest Region office in Nanaimo.

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